UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.115/SR.663
29 June 1993
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 663rd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 2 February 1993, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. GAMBARI (Nigeria)

CONTENTS

Adoption of the agenda

Election of the Bureau of the Special Committee

Election of the Chairmen of the Subcommittees

Other matters

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Office of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

Any corrections to the record of this meeting and of other meetings will be issued in a corrigendum.

The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The agenda was adopted.

ELECTION OF THE BUREAU OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE

2. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that the Bureau of the Special Committee was made up of a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur, and that if there were no objections, he would take it that the Special Committee agreed to retain the same composition.

3. It was so decided.

4. Mr. MUMBENGEGWI (Zimbabwe) said that his country, which was one of the front-line States and had long participated in the struggle against apartheid, proposed to re-elect the outgoing Bureau. He was confident that it would continue to fulfil the Committee's mandate as effectively as it had in the past, especially at the crucial turning-point now reached in the struggle against apartheid.

5. He paid tribute to Mr. Gambari for his conduct of the work of the Committee and for his efforts to produce a concerted view by the Member States of the United Nations on the question of South Africa. Those efforts had yielded concrete results; a case in point was the adoption by consensus of the programme of the Centre against Apartheid at the last session of the General Assembly.

6. He also paid tribute to the three Vice-Chairmen and to the Rapporteur.

7. Mr. DENEGRI (Peru) said that the Special Committee had succeeded in marshalling international opinion in support of the creation of a democratic non-racial society in South Africa, and that his country therefore supported the re-election of the outgoing Bureau as proposed by the representative of Zimbabwe.

8. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Special Committee wished to re-elect him as Chairman, Mr. Acharya (Nepal), Mr. Batiouk (Ukraine) and Mrs. des Iles (Trinidad and Tobago) as Vice-Chairmen, and Mr. Goel (India) as Rapporteur.

9. It was so decided.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMEN OF THE SUBCOMMITTEES

10. The CHAIRMAN proposed that Mr. Awoonor (Ghana) should be re-elected as Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Implementation of the United Nations Resolutions on South Africa and that Mr. Mumbengegwi (Zimbabwe) should be re-elected as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Developments in South Africa.

11. Mr. BATIOUK (Ukraine) congratulated the Chairman and the members of the Bureau for their re-election and assured them of the cooperation of the members of the Committee. He also seconded the Chairman's proposal for the re-election of the Chairmen of the Subcommittees, who in his view had played an extremely important role in the work of the Committee.

12. The Chairmen of the two Subcommittees were re-elected.

OTHER MATTERS

13. The CHAIRMAN said that South Africa was on the verge of reaching a political settlement of the tragic conflict that had divided it for so long. The international community must, however, remain firm in its resolve to ensure that all South Africans might truly share in the fruits of a new and just society.

14. At the beginning of each year, the Special Committee against Apartheid made an assessment of developments in South Africa, outlined its strategy for months to come and presented its programme of work. The general guidelines for the future activities of the Special Committee had been established by the General Assembly in December 1992 specifically in the consensus resolutions. Those were based on the Special Committee's report (A/47/22). The Committee also considered the most recent report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the question of South Africa (S/25004). After the failure of CODESA II in May 1992, the country experienced waves of violence and heightened political tension. This situation, exacerbated by economic problems, threatened to erupt into civil war. Aware of the danger, political leaders in South Africa opened a series of bilateral talks which gave hope for the resumption of multiparty negotiations within several weeks.

15. Shocked by the Boipatong massacre, the international community had become aware that it was necessary to bring an end to the violence. The sending of observers by the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the European Community also helped to reduce the political tension and to foster a healthy environment for negotiations.

16. The Special Committee had played a crucial role in mobilizing international opinion against apartheid. The Committee had adapted to the new developments, and its support for the vital but still precarious process of peaceful change in South Africa was appreciated and supported by the whole international community. In fact, the resolution on the programme of work of the Special Committee had for the first time been adopted by consensus at the most recent session of the General Assembly.

17. With the establishment, in 1993, of a transitional authority or government, South Africa should start out along the road to a fully constitutional, non-racial and democratic society. The phase of joint governing responsibility would lead to the first full and free elections, which would determine the future of South Africa. Taking into consideration the ongoing negotiations in the country, it was not unrealistic to hope that, by 1994, transitional arrangements would be in place to elect a constituent assembly and establish an interim Government of national unity. A main objective of the work of the Special Committee in 1993 was to encourage and support all those who

(The Chairman)

participated in good faith in the political process. The work programme of the Special Committee included a mission to South Africa to establish contacts with as many as possible of the parties involved in order to be informed directly by leading representatives participating in the negotiation process of their views. As a political body of the General Assembly, that mission was distinct from the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) set up by the Secretary-General under a mandate from the Security Council. While supporting the same goals, it would not trespass in the area of responsibilities entrusted to UNOMSA.

18. In order to facilitate a peaceful and stable transition in South Africa, the Special Committee would seek to promote international assistance aimed at helping South Africans to overcome the social and economic disparities resulting from the policies of apartheid.

19. A seminar organized at Windhoek in May 1992 had brought together South African researchers and future policy-makers and senior representatives of various United Nations agencies to discuss South Africa's socio-economic problems and the future role of the United Nations in addressing those problems.

20. In its resolution 47/116 B, the General Assembly had commended the Committee for holding that seminar and authorized its follow-up through sectoral seminars on specific topics. In 1993, the Committee was planning to organize a seminar on economic growth and sustainable social development in South Africa, and hoped that the World Bank, the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations and other agencies and institutions would lend their support.

21. In the context of electoral assistance which the United Nations could be called upon to provide in South Africa, the Special Committee considered that a seminar on the role and function of United Nations electoral monitoring would be useful. It had therefore decided to include such a seminar in its work programme, as well as a symposium on political tolerance in a pluralistic democracy.

22. With regard to the protection and promotion of human rights, the Special Committee was planning to hold a seminar on the promotion of a culture of human rights and the respective roles of law enforcement, ombudsmen and other mechanisms of remedy, and of community training. He hoped to enlist the support of the Centre for Human Rights in that endeavour.

23. The role played by anti-apartheid movements and non-governmental organizations around the world could not be overemphasized. They had had a decisive influence on government policies and their support remained vital in the transition period. The Committee was therefore planning to bring together the European and American NGOs later in the year to discuss their new role and how they could contribute to the assistance needed by the disadvantaged sectors of South Africa during the transition period. The Special Committee would also continue to support anti-apartheid movements all over the world.

24. In his report, mentioned earlier, the Secretary-General urged that special attention should be given to the role which South African women could play in

(The Chairman)

maintaining cohesion and stability. In order to show solidarity with them, the Special Committee planned to send a support mission consisting of eminent women to South Africa later in the year.

25. As Chairman of the Special Committee, he would continue to consult with all those concerned. He was sure that he could continue to count on support from all the members of the Special Committee, from other Member States of the United Nations, from the Secretary-General and the United Nations Secretariat, and in particular from the Centre against Apartheid. Realizing that a shortage of staff was now constraining the work of the Centre, he commended its Director and staff for their dedication.

26. The international community should continue to support the positive but fragile process under way in South Africa. By the end of 1993, apartheid should be dead and buried. The peoples of South Africa would not tolerate the prolongation of apartheid policies and structures beyond that year.

27. Mr. RAMOUL (Algeria) congratulated the Chairman on his re-election, which enabled the Special Committee to continue to work uninterruptedly to realize the objectives of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, particularly the establishment of a non-racial, united and democratic South Africa. He assured the Chairman of the support of his delegation, which was fully prepared to assist him in that noble cause.

28. Mr. MIYENI (Observer for the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC)) congratulated the members of the Bureau on their re-election and thanked them, as well as the member States of the Special Committee and the staff of the Centre against Apartheid, for their efforts.

29. He stated that, for PAC, the real objective of the negotiations under way was the transfer of power, and not power-sharing. While bilateral talks with the South African regime were necessary for establishing a new multilateral forum, they would only harm the democratization process if they led to secret agreements on a new constitution, which could only be drafted by an elected constituent assembly.

30. Given the failure of CODESA, a new negotiating forum should be established which was free from the defects of CODESA and open to all political parties of a national character. It should have a pointed agenda dealing with the modalities of establishing an elected constituent assembly and the mode of control of the transitional process; it should have neutral international involvement in organizing its meetings, selecting its chairpersons, security, verification and administration; and it should observe the principle of transparency (by allowing media access and by publishing weekly reports). Finally, it should not be a decision-making body, but a body designed to facilitate the transition process.

31. In connection with the organization of elections, the regime should finance the election programmes of all parties from taxpayer money on an equal basis in order to ensure the democratic participation of each party. All national parties should also henceforth agree on matters relating to voter registration, due to commence in March 1993.

(Mr. Miyeni, Observer, PAC)

32. In addition, the decision by the regime to cancel talks with PAC had been noted. There would be no peace in the country unless all parties were involved in the transition process. While it remained open to a resumption of talks, PAC would certainly not accept any conditions imposed by the regime.

33. PAC condemned the duplicity of the regime, which had used two violent incidents as grounds for breaking off talks, while being constantly involved in such incidents itself, together with the parties to whom it was talking. PAC was gravely concerned by the escalation of violence, for which it held the regime primarily responsible. It called upon the international community to support its call for the expulsion of its mercenaries as a matter of urgency and to monitor the implementation of any measures to be taken in that regard.

34. PAC condemned the harassment of its members by the Goldstone Commission, believing that Justice Goldstone was guilty of the political intolerance which he was supposed to combat. PAC also condemned the decision to arrest PAC members who refused to appear before the Commission.

35. PAC remained committed to all forms of struggle aimed at bringing about the transfer of power in order to achieve national liberation and self-determination. Finally, he called upon the Special Committee to intensify its efforts to ensure that the Declaration of 14 December 1989 was fully implemented and that a new constitution was adopted by the majority of the dispossessed African population.

36. Mr. SHARMA (Nepal) congratulated the Chairman on his re-election, which was a tribute to his competence in conducting the work of the Special Committee. He also thanked the representatives of Peru and Zimbabwe for their statements.

37. Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia), having congratulated the members of the Bureau on their re-election, emphasized the commitment of the Malaysian Government to the objectives of the Special Committee, which he particularly commended for its success in adapting to the situation as it developed and for having retained its independent judgement at all times, while still remaining loyal to the aspirations of all Member States of the United Nations.

38. At a time when South Africa was on the verge of completely eradicating apartheid, Malaysia, on the basis of its own experience, wished to say to those fighting in the country's interior that the time had come to adopt a different approach by demonstrating tolerance and unity in order to achieve, in the coming years, the objectives they had set for themselves.

39. Mrs. des ILES (Trinidad and Tobago) congratulated the Chairman on his re-election, and thanked him for his introductory statement in which he had clearly indicated the objectives to be pursued by the Special Committee during the current decisive year for the struggle against apartheid. She also congratulated the other members of the Bureau and the Chairmen of the Subcommittees on their re-election. On behalf of herself, her delegation and her Government, she said that Trinidad and Tobago would spare no effort to work with the Special Committee until the advent of a democratic and non-racial South Africa.

40. Mr. MAKHUBELA (Observer for the African National Congress (ANC)) congratulated the Chairman, whose commitment to the struggle against apartheid was measured by the success of the Special Committee in sensitizing the Member States of the United Nations and the entire international community to the sufferings of the South African people, victims of a system which the United Nations had rightly denounced as a crime against humanity.

41. The ANC believed that the resumption of multilateral negotiations and the creation of conditions conducive to free political activity gave great hope to the South African people as a whole. It pledged to continue to cooperate with the Special Committee, which would still have an extremely important role to play during the decisive year of 1993.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.